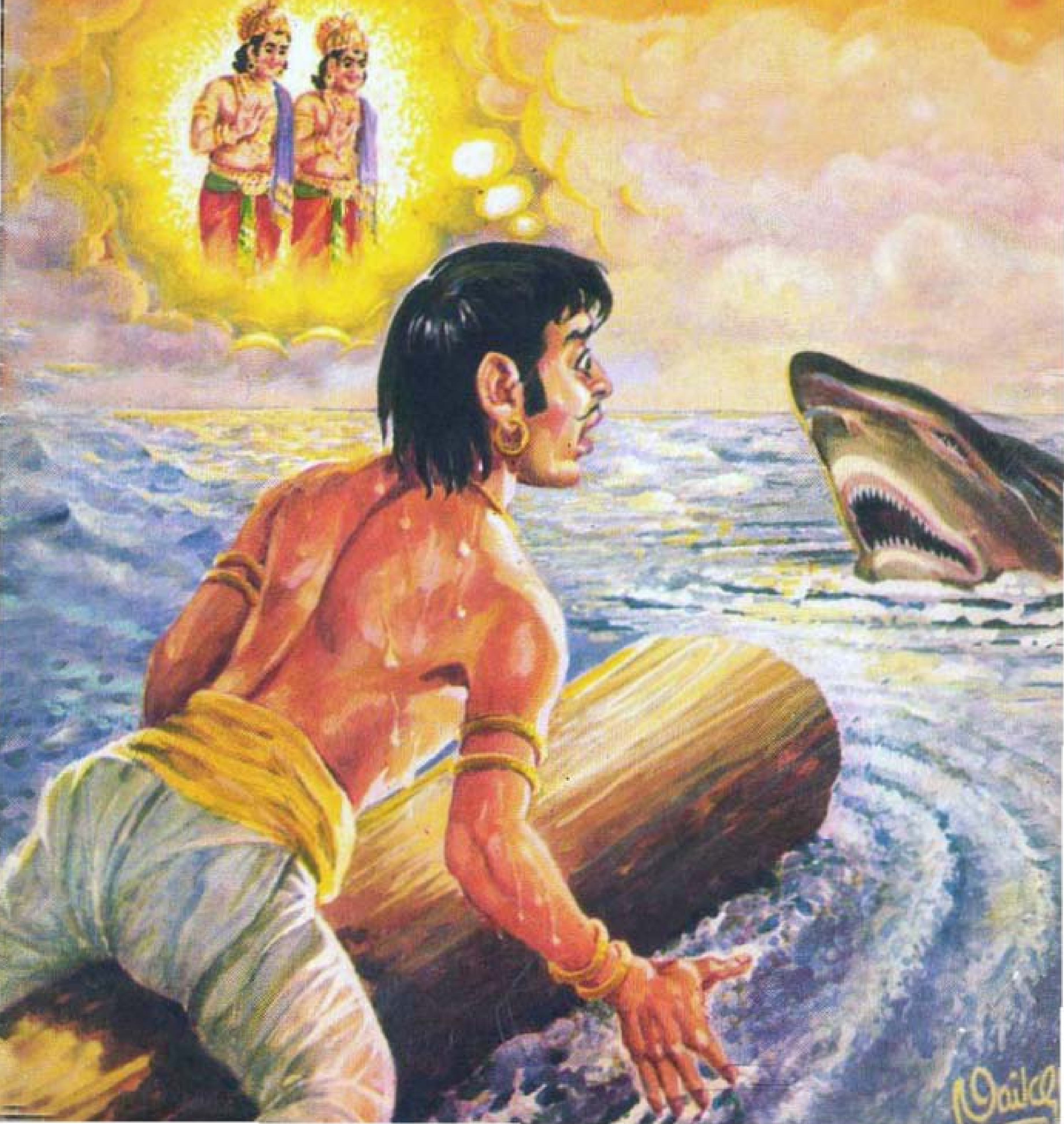
AMAR CHITRA KATHA

No. 319 Rs.

ASHWINS TO THE RESCUE

ADAPTED FROM THE RIGVEDA



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No. 319, October 1, 1984

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ASHWINS TO THE RESCUE

In the Rigveda there are several hymns addressed to the Ashwins who are the divine physicians. Judging from the number of these hymns, the twin deities seem to be next in importance only to Indra, Agni and Soma.

Most of the riks or hymns invoking the Ashwins are either an appeal to them for help or panegyrics for the help rendered to men in distress.

We also learn from the hymns that the twins are inseparable. They are extremely fond of honey and even carry it wherever they go, distributing it to bees and mortals.

The two stories in this Chitra Katha are developed solely from Vedic literature.


BHUJYU
SHIPS LADEN WITH RICHES WERE SAILING BACK TO SINDHU, THE LAND OF RAJA TUGRA.
THE MERCHANTS ON BOARD WERE QUITE PLEASED WITH THEMSELVES.
WE HAVE DONE BETTER ON THIS VOYAGE THAN WE DID EVER BEFORE.
OR CAN HOPE TO DO IN THE FUTURE.
OUR RAJA WILL BE PLEASED WITH THE MONEY THE ROYAL TREASURY WILL GET AS ITS SHARE. I AM IMPATIENT TO LAND.
PATIENCE, MY FRIEND. SINCE WE ARE TAKING THE ROUTE THROUGH THE STRAIT, WE SHOULD GET HOME FASTER THAN USUAL.


MEANWHILE AT A HIDEOUT ON AN ISLAND BY THE STRAIT—
HOW MANY DO YOU SEE?
SEVEN.
ARE OUR SHIPS IN POSITION?
YES. AND OUR MEN ARE READY.
SO AM I. COME ON.
LET THEM COME NEARER... ALL SEVEN OF THEM!


NOW ATTACK!
TAKE EVERYTHING BUT SPARE OUR LIVES.
TRANSFER EVERYTHING TO OUR SHIPS.


A FEW DAYS LATER AT THE COURT OF RAJA TUGRA —
... AND AS WE ENTERED THE STRAIT...
...WE WERE AMBUSHED BY SOME ISLANDERS AND ROBBED OF ALL OUR CARGO.
THESE ISLANDERS HAVE BECOME A MENACE.
UNLESS THEY ARE SUBDUED NO TRADE IS POSSIBLE WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD, MAHARAJ.
AS YOUR KING IT IS MY DUTY TO MAKE THE SEAS SAFE FOR YOU. AND I SHALL DO IT.


LATER TUGRA SPOKE TO HIS SON BHUJYU.
BHUJYU, I AM GOING TO LEAD AN EXPEDITION TO THE ISLAND.
YOU ? NO FATHER. AS YOUR SON, THAT SHOULD BE MY PRIVILEGE.
BUT YOU ARE YOUNG, INEXPERIENCED AND UNACQUAINTED WITH THE HAZARDS OF THE SEA, MY SON.
ALL THE MORE REASON WHY I SHOULD GO, FATHER. IT WOULD BE A GOOD BEGINNING. HOW ELSE WILL I GAIN EXPERIENCE?
OH, NO, MY DEAR CHILD! THE ISLAND CHIEF IS WICKED... WILY... TREACHEROUS...


I AM THE SON OF A KING... BORN TO DESTROY THE WICKED AND PROTECT THE VIRTUOUS.
YOU MAKE ME HAPPY AND YOU MAKE ME PROUD, MY SON.
MOTHER, SEND ME ON MY FIRST MISSION WITH YOUR BLESSINGS.
FOR A MOMENT, I FORGOT MY DHARMA. FORGIVE ME, BHUJYU.
LIVE LONG, MY SON! MAY YOU BE CROWNED WITH SUCCESS.


THE CALL WAS GIVEN...
...AND BHUJYU'S MEN ASSEMBLED BEFORE HIM.
WE ARE WITH YOU, BHUJYU.
LET US PRAY TO PUSHAN* TO SHOW US THE RIGHT PATH.
BHUJYU MADE OFFERINGS TO VARIOUS DEITIES.
THIS IS FOR PUSHAN, THE PATH-FINDER.
AND THIS FOR THE ASHVIN TWINS!
AND THIS FOR INDRA.

* SUN-GOD

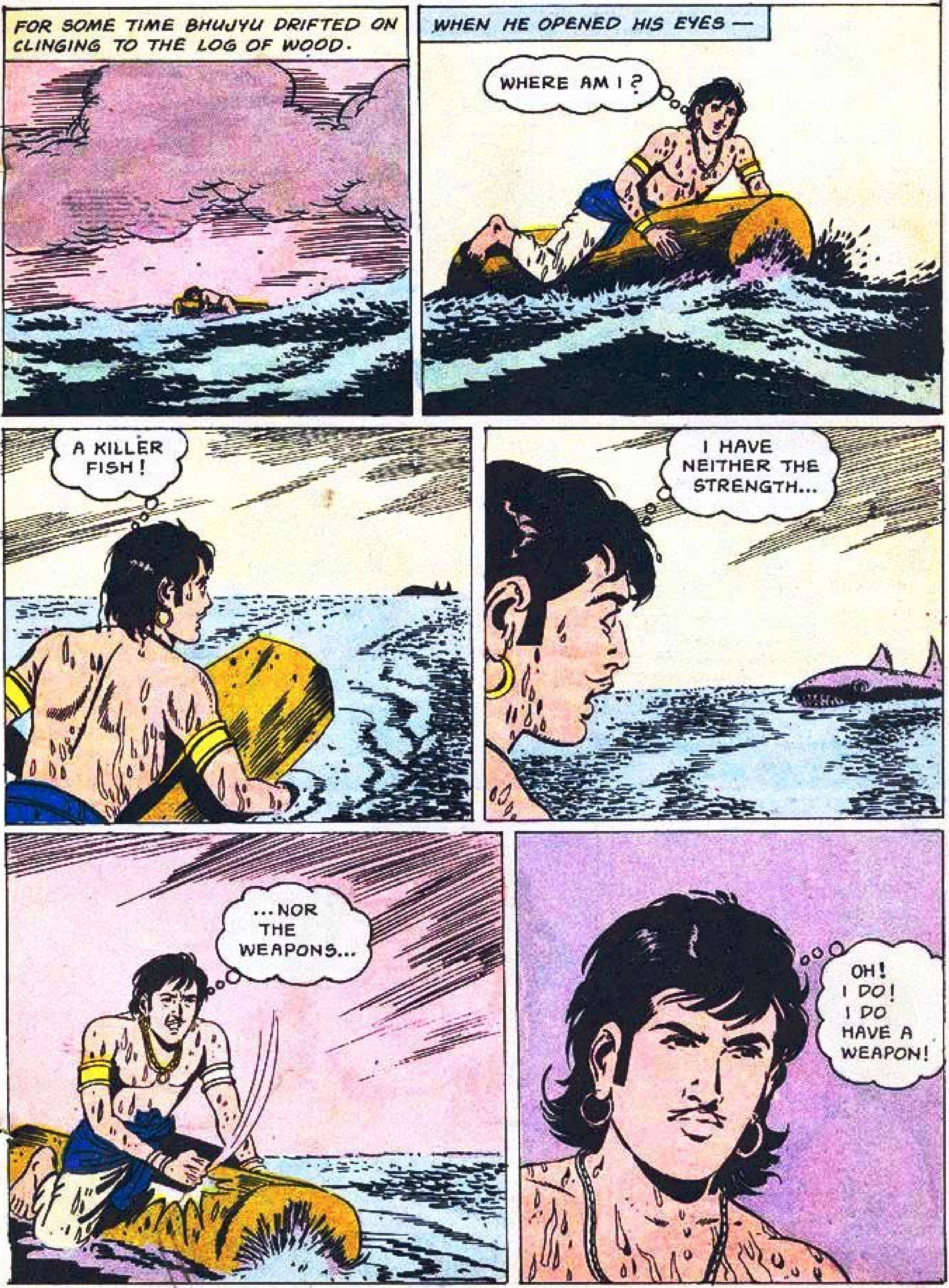

THE FLEET SET SAIL.
LONG LIVE SAPTA-SINDHU!
AFTER A VOYAGE OF THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS —
BIRDS! WE MUST BE NEARING THE ISLAND!
BHUJYU BLEW A MIGHTY CONCH! HIS SOLDIERS EMITTED WAR CRIES.
JUST THEN A VETERAN SAILOR OF A HUNDRED VOYAGES CAME TO BHUJYU.
PRINCE BHUJYU!
I FEAR WE ARE IN FOR A STORM.
A STORM!


THE VERY NEXT MOMENT—
HELP!
EVEN AS BHUJYU TRIED TO PULL THE MAN UP...
...A HUGE WAVE HIT THE SHIP.


MOST OF THE SHIPS SANK AND MANY OF THE MEN WERE DROWNED.
BHUJYU HOWEVER WAS ALIVE. HE CAME UP...
...AND WITH GREAT EFFORT SWAM ON.
SUDDENLY—
A SHIP! ONE OF OUR SHIPS!
HELP! HELP!


DID YOU HEAR THAT CRY ?
ONE OF OUR MEN CALLING OUT FOR HELP.
SHALL WE TURN THE BOAT ?
NO !
LET US GET AWAY FROM THIS ACCURSED PLACE.
HELP!
KEEP GOING.


THE STORM AT LAST SUBSIDED. BHUJYU WAS ALL ALONE, AFLOAT ON THE HIGH SEAS.
NO... I CAN'T KEEP IT UP... ANY LONGER...
O ASHVINS, COME TO MY RESCUE!
A LOG OF WOOD!
PRAISE BE TO YOUR NAME, O ASHVINS.
BHUJYU SLUMPED ON THE LOG OF WOOD AND CLOSED HIS EYES.


FOR SOME TIME BHUJYU DRIFTED ON CLINGING TO THE LOG OF WOOD.
WHEN HE OPENED HIS EYES —
WHERE AM I ?
A KILLER FISH !
I HAVE NEITHER THE STRENGTH...
...NOR THE WEAPONS...
OH! I DO! I DO HAVE A WEAPON!

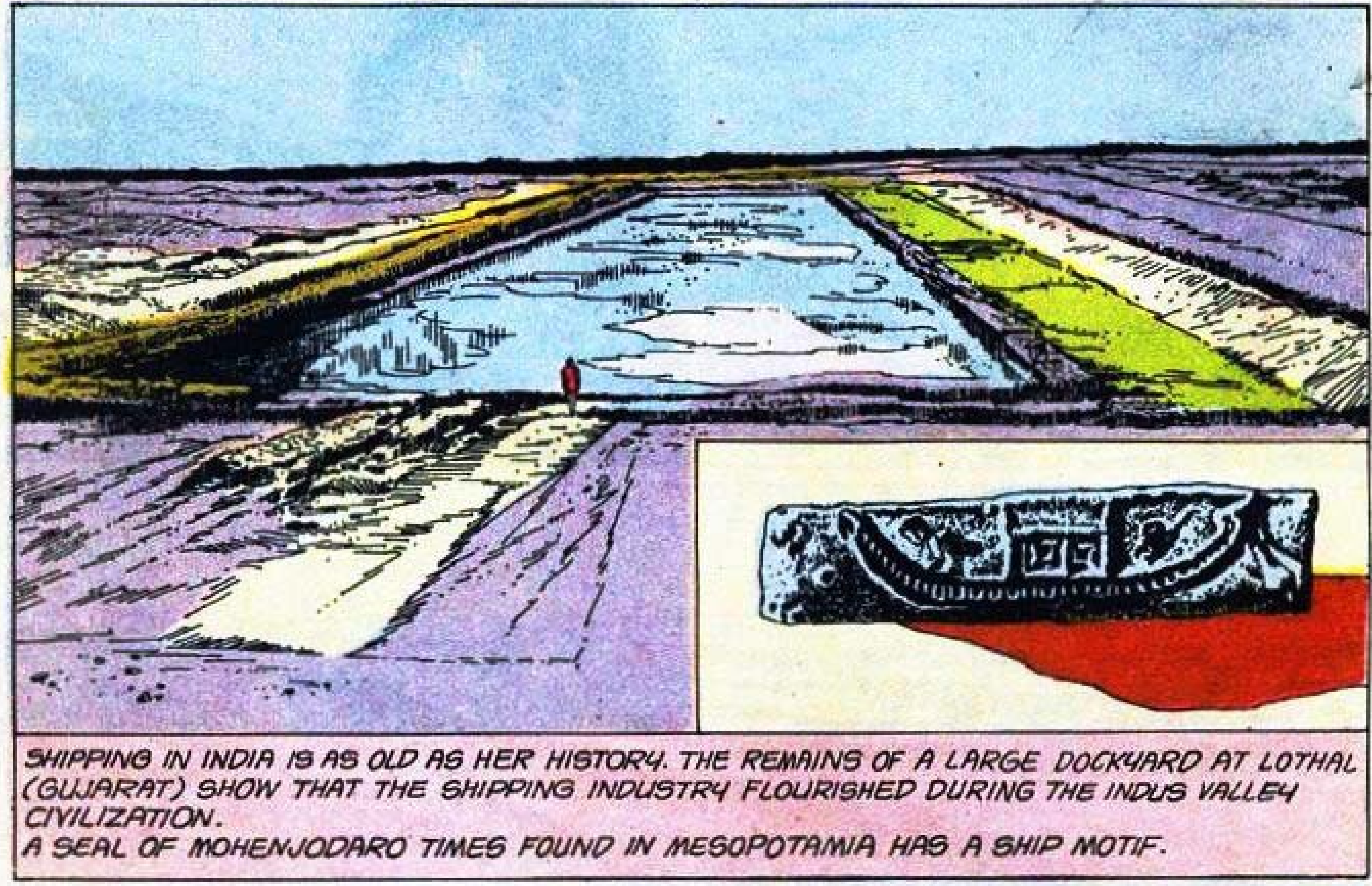

COME ! COME MY FRIEND.
SINK YOUR TEETH INTO IT. SINK THEM HARD.
OVERCOME BY THIRST BHUJYU TOOK A MOUTHFUL OF SALT WATER...
...ONLY TO SPIT IT OUT.
OH, FOR SOME WATER !

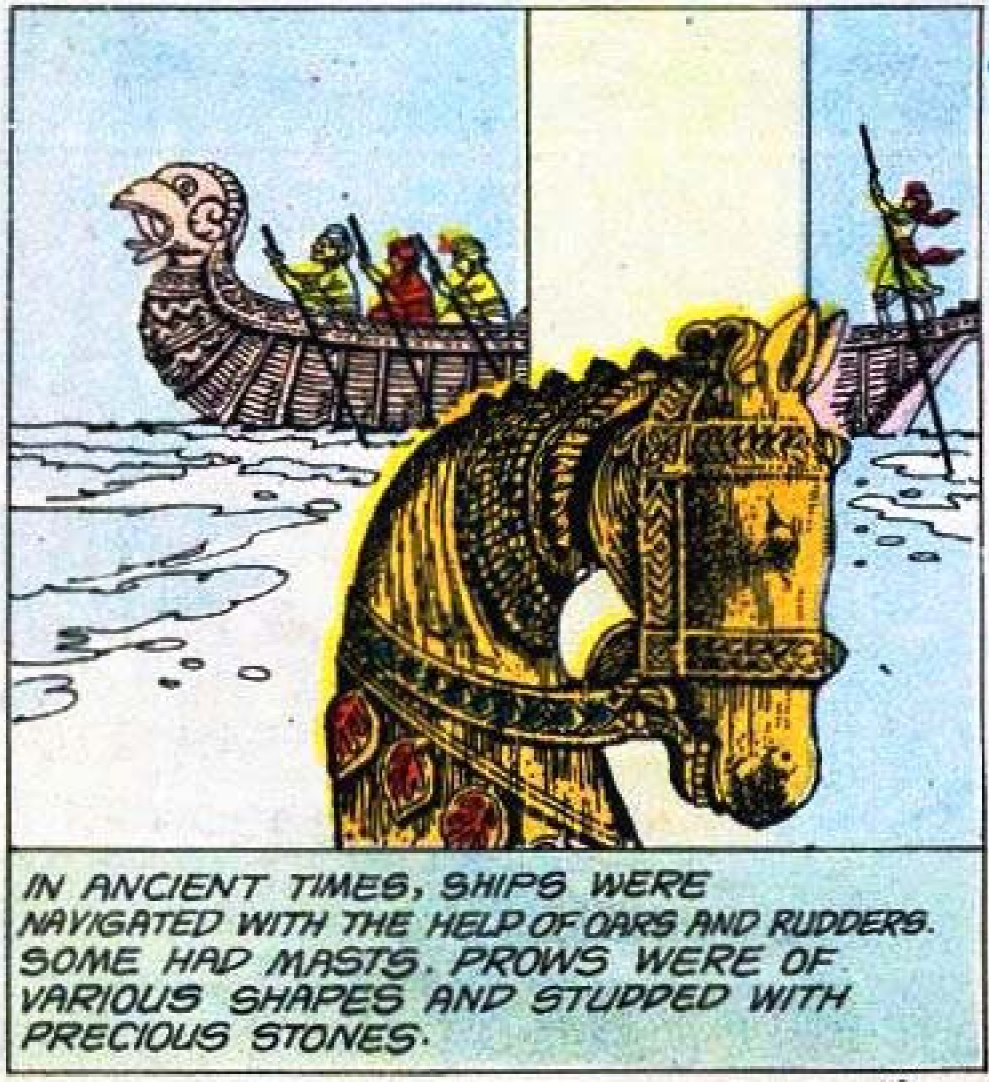


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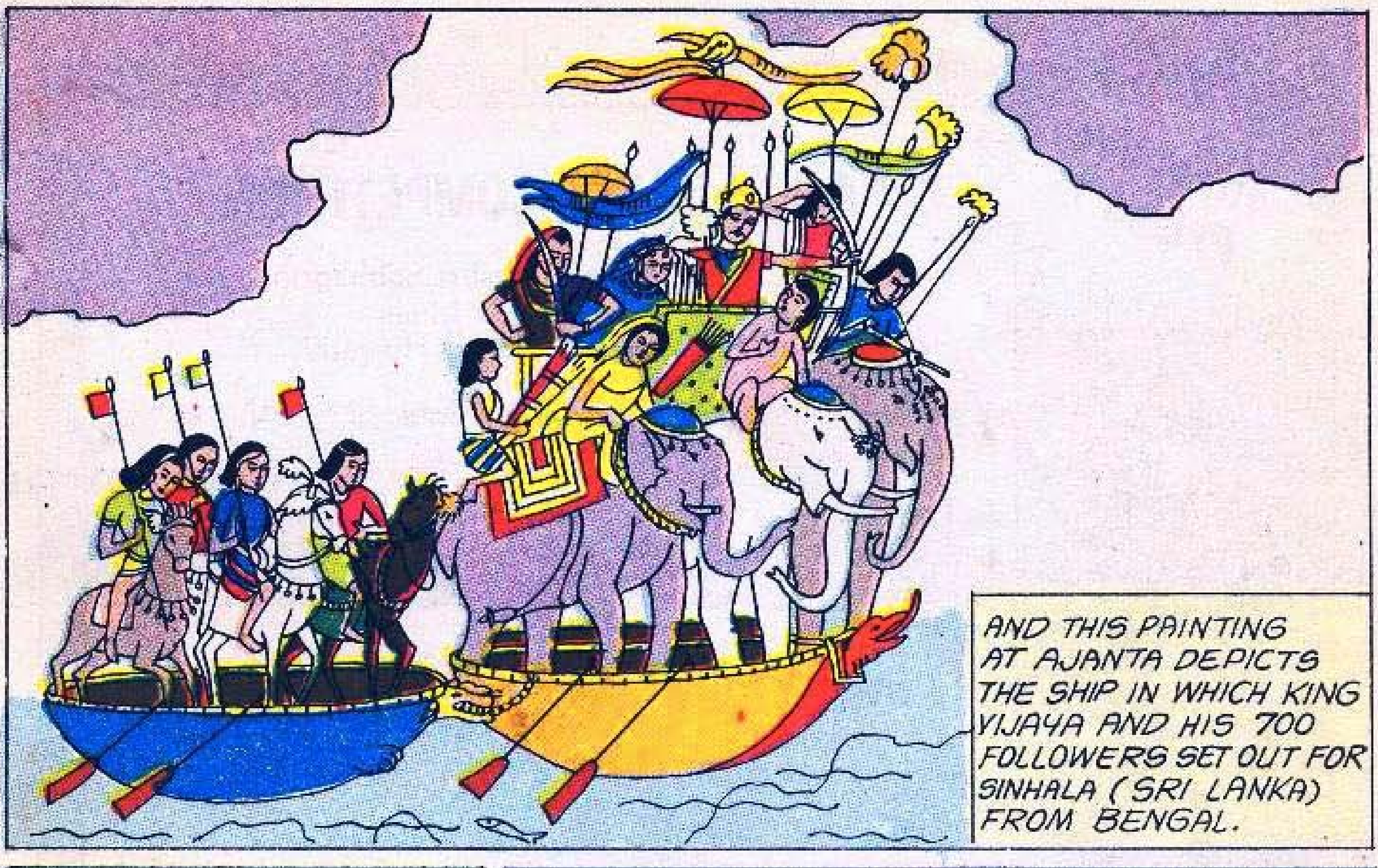
Boats, Ships and Ports of Ancient India

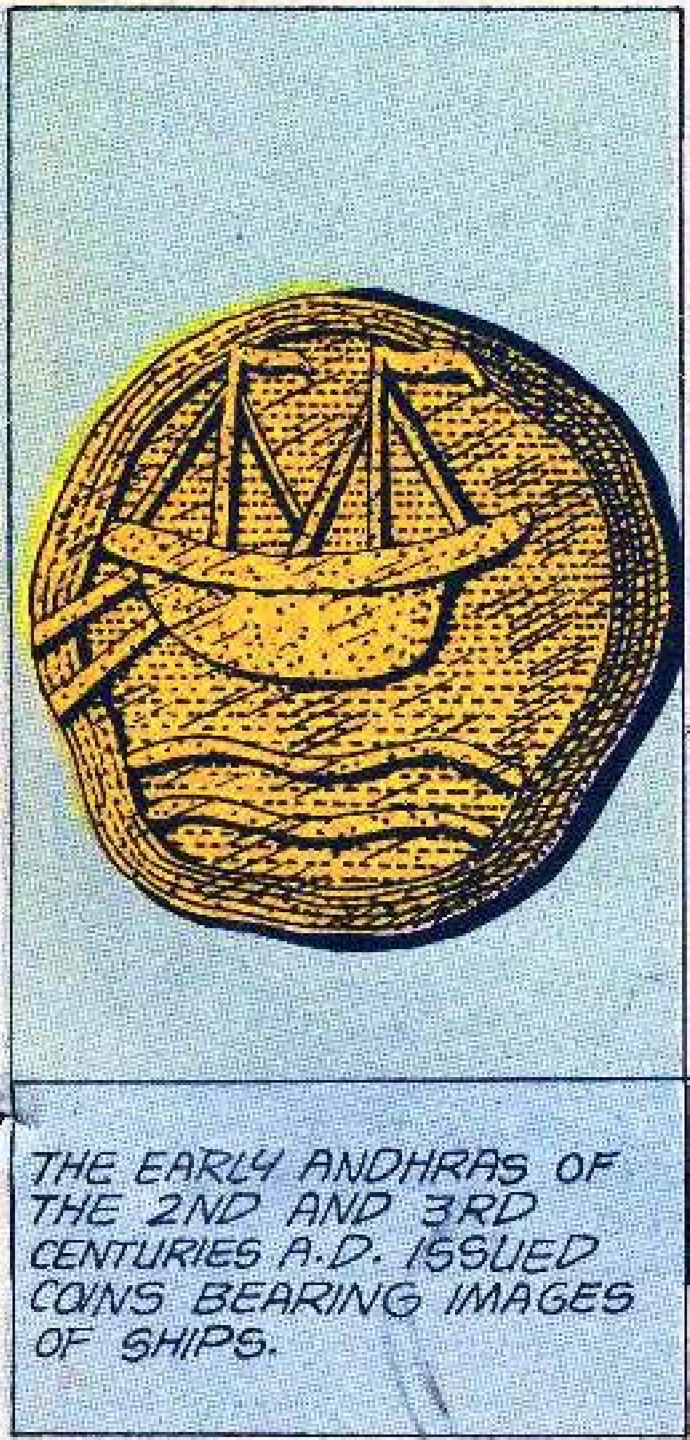
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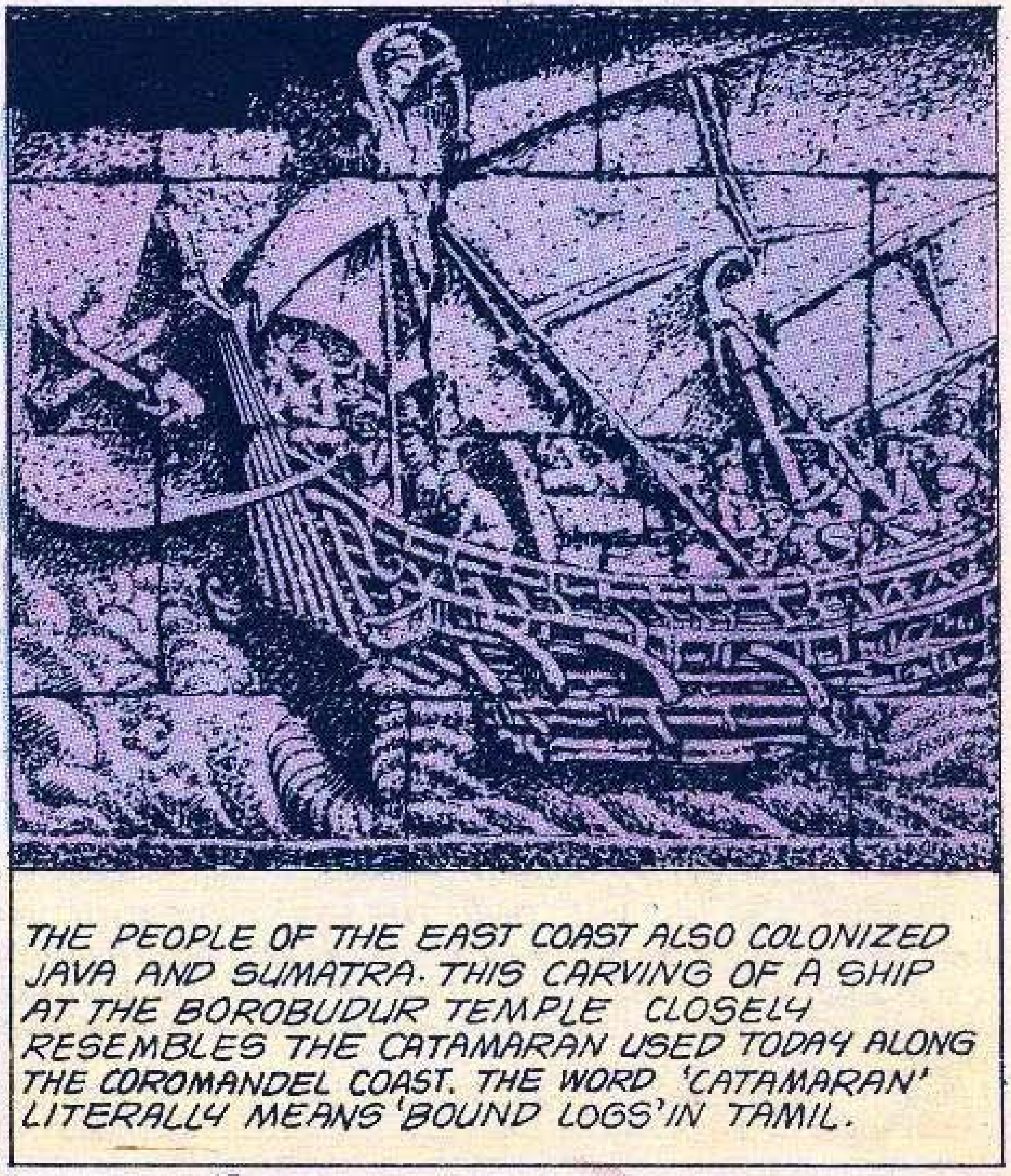







AND THIS PAINTING AT AJANTA DEPICTS THE SHIP IN WHICH KING VIJAYA AND HIS 700 FOLLOWERS SET OUT FOR SINHALA (SRI LANKA) FROM BENGAL.


THE EARLY ANDHRAS OF THE 2ND AND 3RD CENTURIES A.D. ISSUED COINS BEARING IMAGES OF SHIPS.


THE PEOPLE OF THE EAST COAST ALSO COLONIZED JAVA AND SUMATRA. THIS CARVING OF A SHIP AT THE BOROBUDUR TEMPLE CLOSELY RESEMBLES THE CATAMARAN USED TODAY ALONG THE COROMANDEL COAST. THE WORD 'CATAMARAN' LITERALLY MEANS 'BOUND LOGS' IN TAMIL.

Attractive Prizes !



FANCY DRESS COMPETITION

Venue : Birla Matushri Sabhagriha,
New Marine Lines
(Near Bombay Hospital)

Date & Time : Saturday, October 27, 1984 at 9.30 a.m.

Theme : Any theme of your choice from the titles published so far in either ***AMAR CHITRA KATHA*** or ***TINKLE***

Eligibility :
1. Open to readers of AMAR CHITRA KATHA and TINKLE living in and around Bombay.
2. Age limit :
   Group A: 8 to 11 years
   Group B: 12 to 14 years

Elimination Round : An elimination round in full costume will be held on October 26, 1984, from 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. Only those who are selected in the elimination round will participate in the fancy dress competition, to be held on October 27, 1984.

Registration : Register with us today by giving your name, address, age and the item you wish to present.

Fancy Dress Competition Section
AMAR CHITRA KATHA
Mahalaxmi Chambers (Basement)
22, Bhulabhai Desai Road
BOMBAY 400 026

ONLY THE FIRST 100 CHILDREN WHO WRITE TO US REGISTERING THEIR NAMES WILL BE ALLOWED TO TAKE PART IN THE ELIMINATION ROUND.


AT THAT MOMENT, NOT FAR OFF A FEW BOATS APPEARED.
CAN YOU SEE THAT SPECK ON THE WATER ? IT SEEMS TO BE A HUMAN BEING.
IT MUST BE SOME HAPLESS, SHIP-WRECKED SAILOR!
ROW HARD IN THAT DIRECTION.

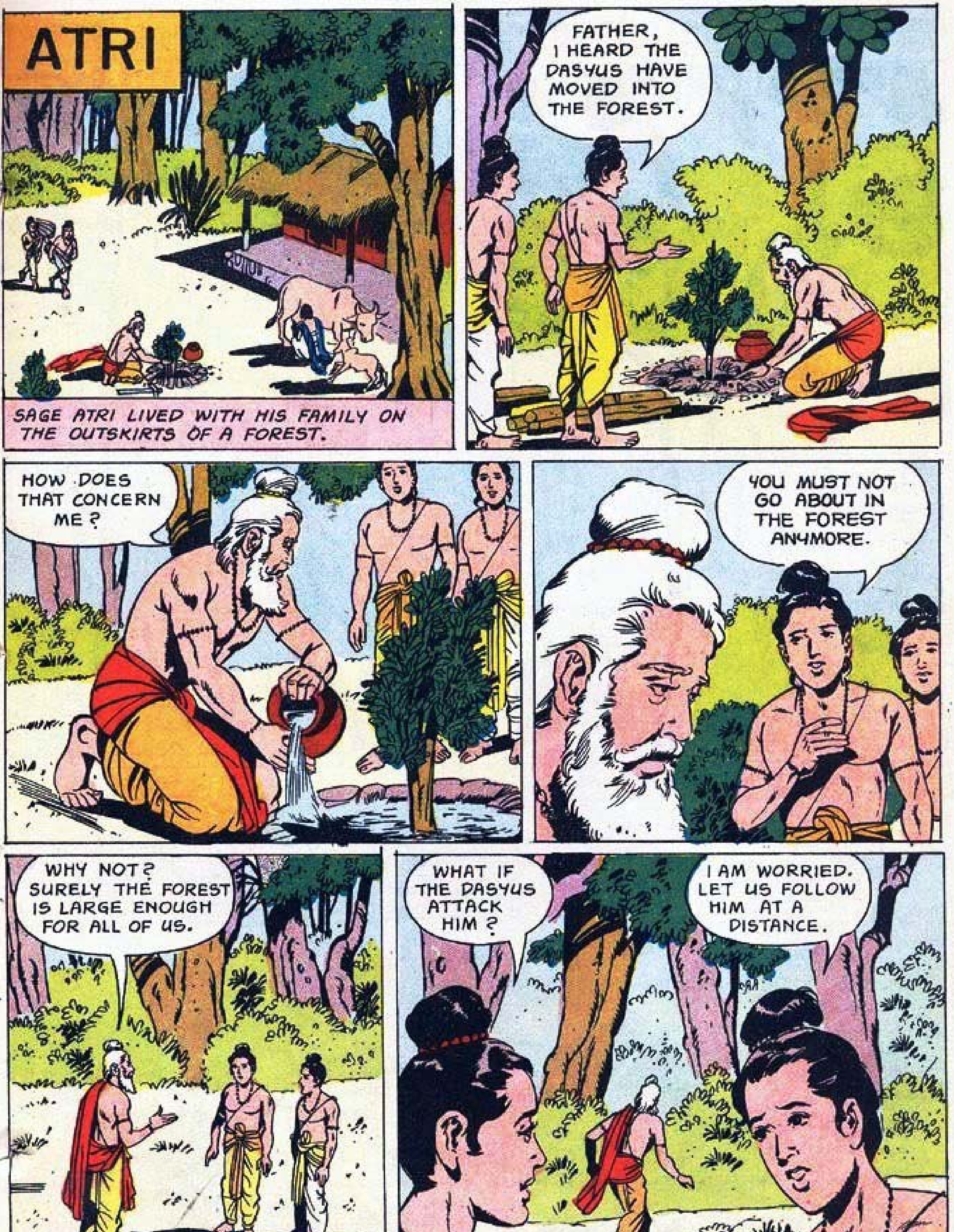

SOON —
HE IS UNCONSCIOUS.
WHEN BHUJYU AT LAST OPENED HIS EYES —
YOU MUST BE THE ASHVINS, THE MIGHTY HEROES, HELPERS OF ALL. ACCEPT MY SALUTATIONS!
THEN THE ASHVINS GAVE BHUJYU SOME HONEY, MILK AND SOMA AND HAD SOME THEMSELVES.

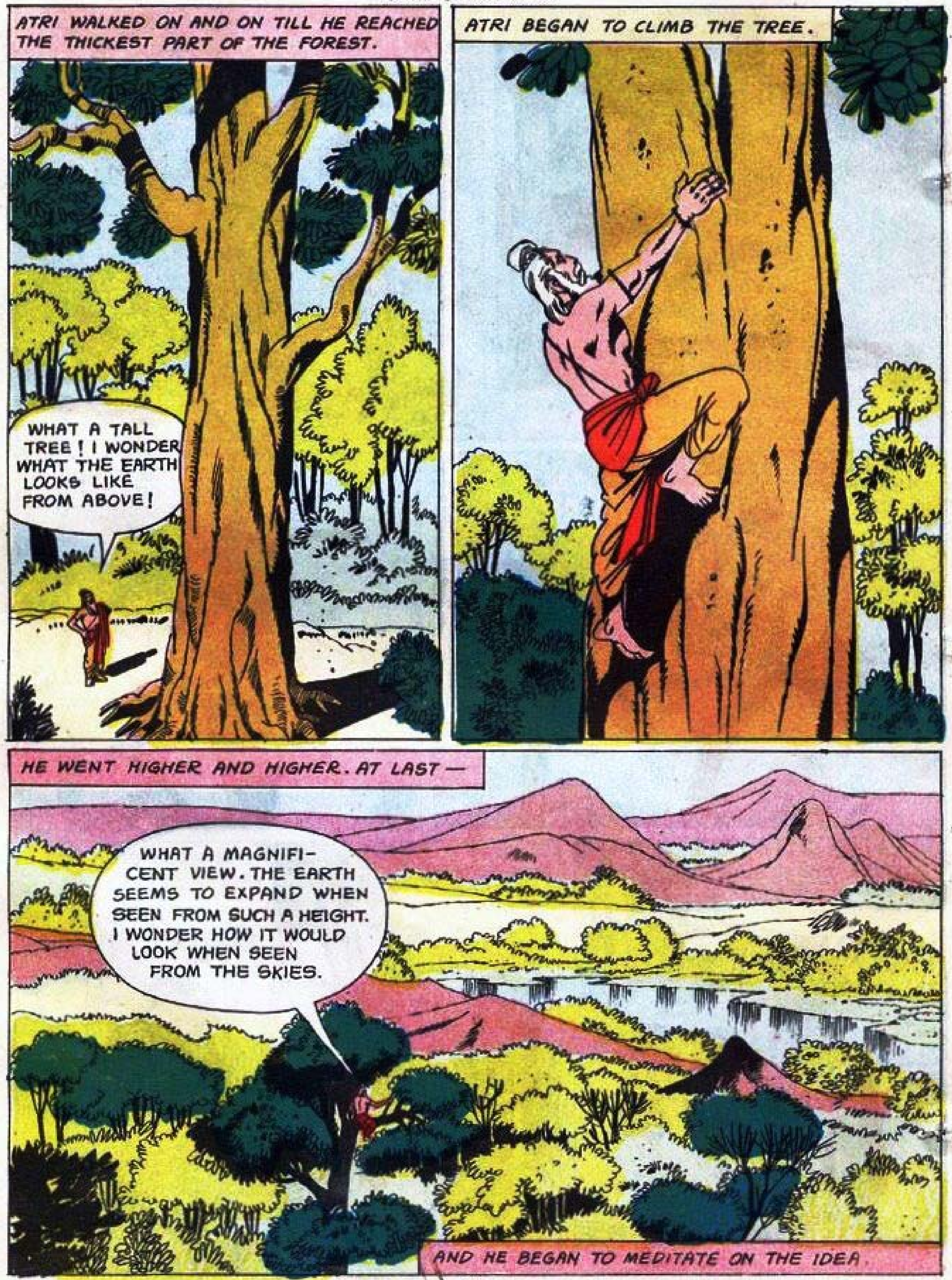

AFTER THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS, THEIR BOATS REACHED THE SHORES OF THE SINDHU LAND.
AS SOON AS THEY HEARD OF THE ARRIVAL OF THE BOATS, TUGRA AND HIS QUEEN CAME THERE.
BHUJYU! OH, BHUJYU! MY SON!
O MOTHER, I AM SAFE! ALIVE!
BY THE TIME THE REUNITED FAMILY LOOKED UP, THE BOATS WITH THE TWINS IN THEM HAD RECEDED INTO THE HORIZON.
O ASHVINS, EVER-VIGILANT HELPERS OF MANKIND, YOU SHOULD HAVE WAITED FOR AN OFFERING OF SOMA AND HONEY!

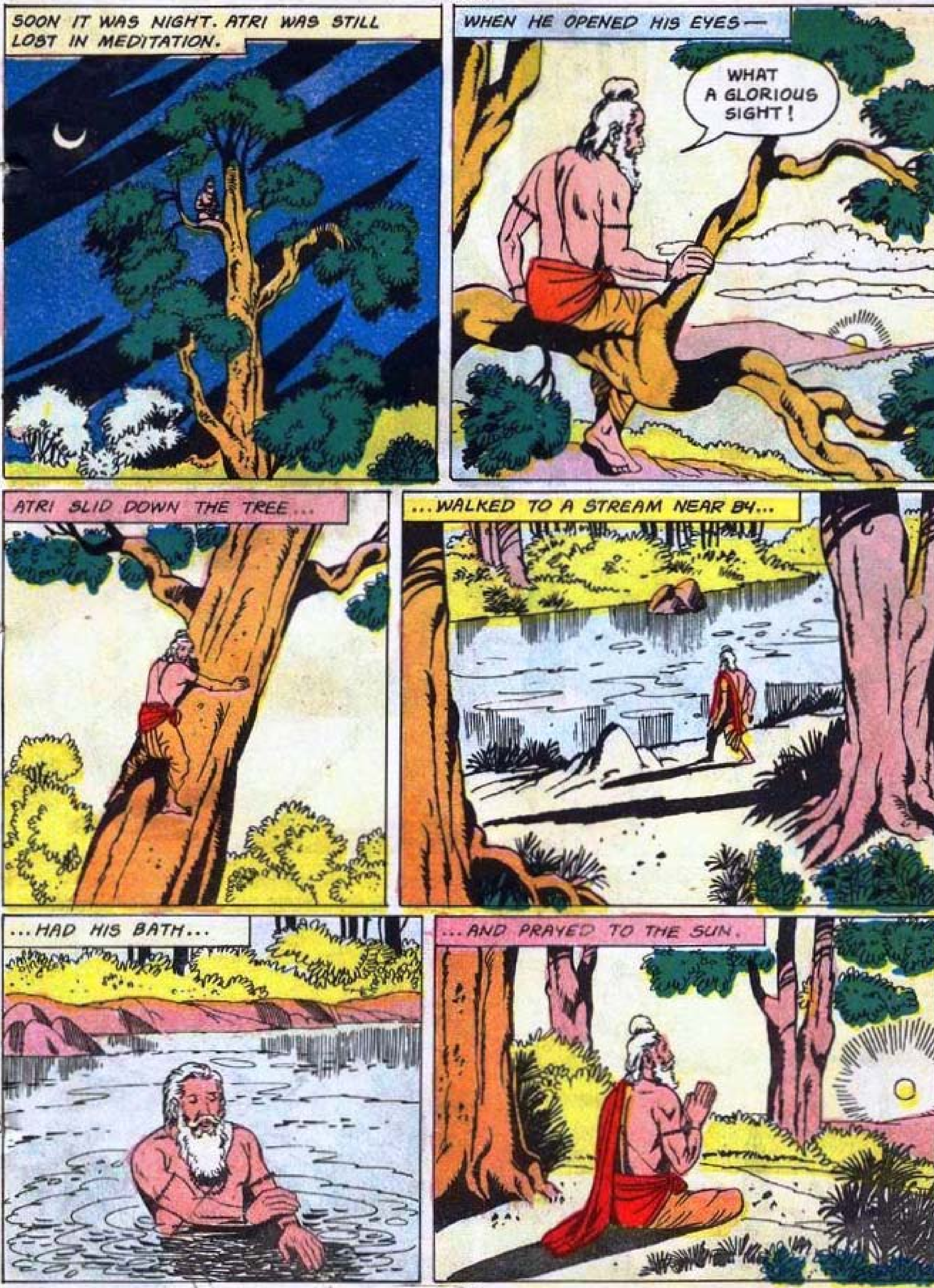

LATER —
FATHER, PERMIT ME TO RESUME THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE ISLAND CHIEF.
ARE YOU NOT AFRAID OF THE SEA?
NO, FATHER.
ON THE CONTRARY I AM MORE CONFIDENT.
WITH THE ASHVINS ON MY SIDE, I HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR.
I WILL NOT STOP YOU, SON. YOU HAVE MY BLESSINGS.


A FEW WEEKS LATER —
SHIPS FROM THE LAND OF TUGRA HAVE BEEN SIGHTED.
IT IS VERY KIND OF HIM TO SEND US A FRESH SUPPLY OF RICHES SO SOON!
MOUNT AN ATTACK AT THE USUAL SPOT.
SOON —
HERE THEY COME!
ATTACK!


THIS TIME THE ISLANDERS WERE IN FOR A SURPRISE.
WELCOME!
IN THE FIERCE BATTLE THAT TOOK PLACE ...
... BHUJYU'S MEN OVERPOWERED THE ISLANDERS ...
... RECOVERED THE STOLEN RICHES ...
... AND RETURNED HOME IN TRIUMPH.
THE SEAS ARE NOW SAFE FOR THE TRADERS OF TUGRA. IN PERFORMING YOUR DHARMA, YOU HAVE HELPED ME PERFORM MINE. I AM PROUD OF YOU, MY SON.


ATRI
SAGE ATRI LIVED WITH HIS FAMILY ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF A FOREST.
FATHER, I HEARD THE DASYUS HAVE MOVED INTO THE FOREST.
HOW DOES THAT CONCERN ME?
YOU MUST NOT GO ABOUT IN THE FOREST ANYMORE.
WHY NOT? SURELY THE FOREST IS LARGE ENOUGH FOR ALL OF US.
WHAT IF THE DASYUS ATTACK HIM?
I AM WORRIED. LET US FOLLOW HIM AT A DISTANCE.


ATRI WALKED ON AND ON TILL HE REACHED THE THICKEST PART OF THE FOREST.
WHAT A TALL TREE ! I WONDER WHAT THE EARTH LOOKS LIKE FROM ABOVE !
ATRI BEGAN TO CLIMB THE TREE.
HE WENT HIGHER AND HIGHER. AT LAST —
WHAT A MAGNIFI-CENT VIEW. THE EARTH SEEMS TO EXPAND WHEN SEEN FROM SUCH A HEIGHT. I WONDER HOW IT WOULD LOOK WHEN SEEN FROM THE SKIES.
AND HE BEGAN TO MEDITATE ON THE IDEA.

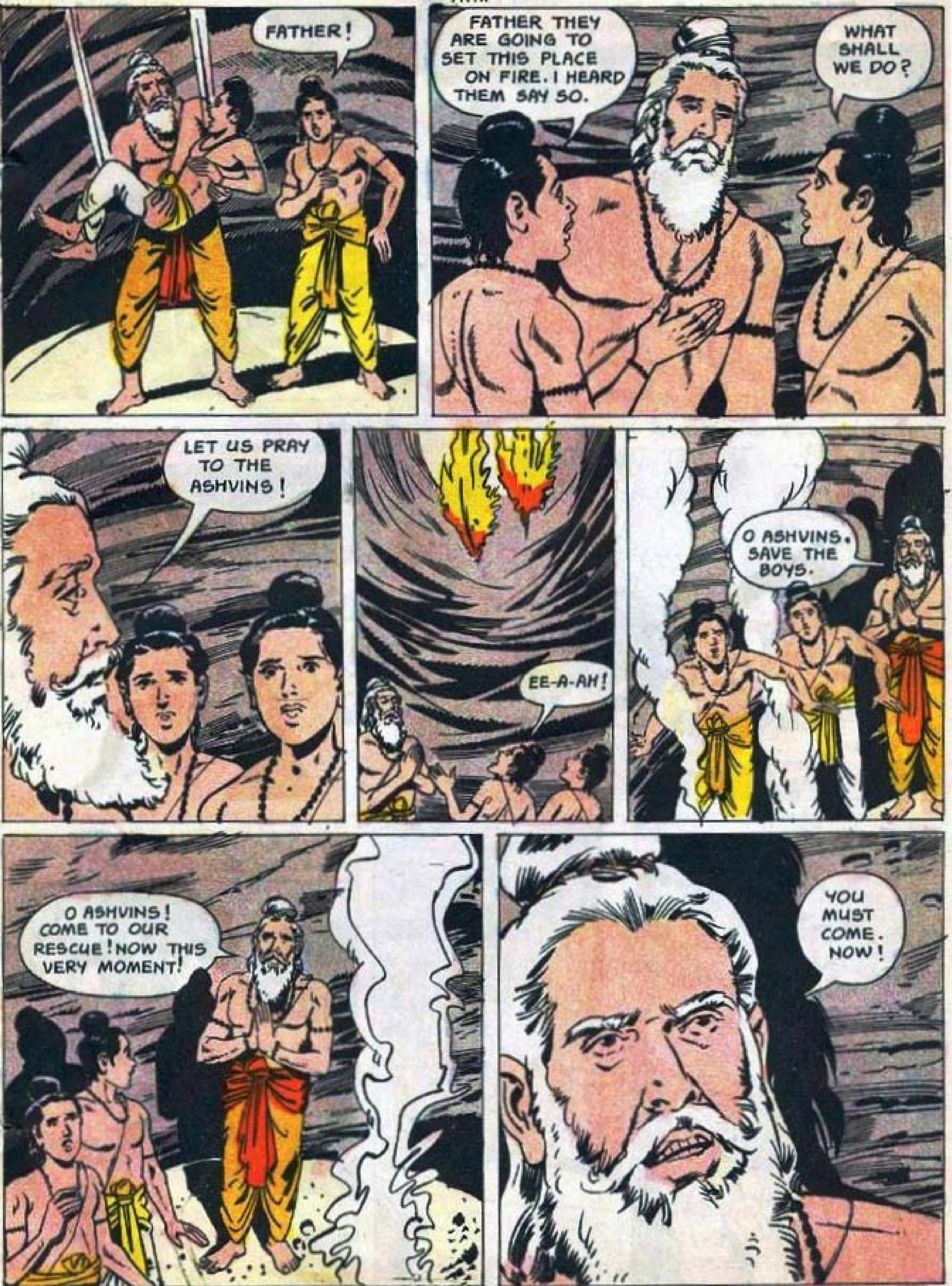

SOON IT WAS NIGHT. ATRI WAS STILL LOST IN MEDITATION.
WHEN HE OPENED HIS EYES—
WHAT A GLORIOUS SIGHT!
ATRI SLID DOWN THE TREE...
...WALKED TO A STREAM NEAR BY...
...HAD HIS BATH...
...AND PRAYED TO THE SUN.

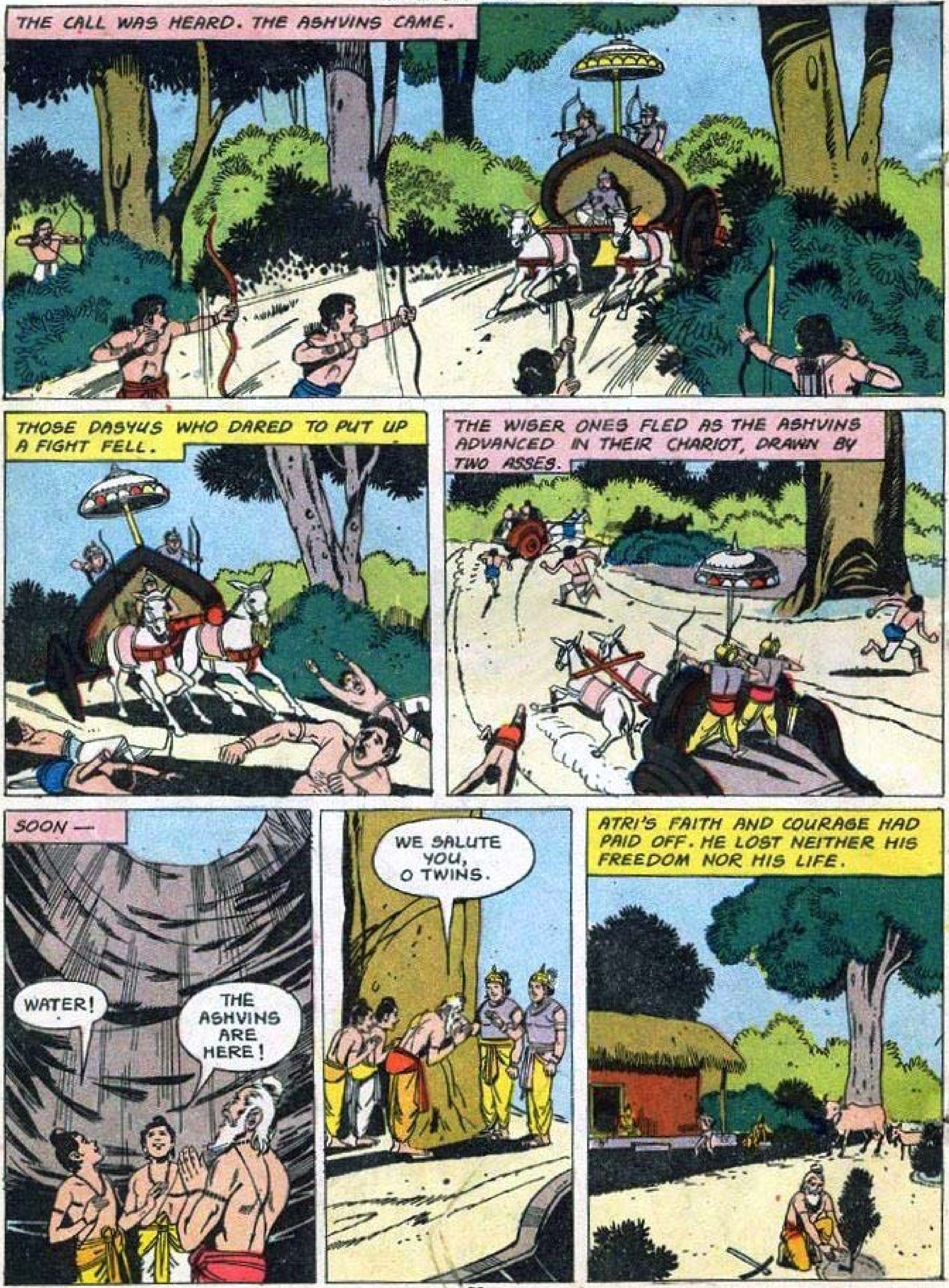

EVEN AS HE OPENED HIS EYES —
AA..
THE DASYUS HAD GOT HIM.
ATRI CRIED OUT THE NAMES OF HIS FAVOURITE DEITIES —
O ASHVINS
FATHER IS IN TROUBLE.
O ASHVINS...
THE BOYS RAN AS FAST AS THEIR LEGS COULD CARRY THEM.


SUDDENLY THEY TRIPPED...
...AND FELL.
I KNEW YOU WERE ANXIOUS TO JOIN YOUR FATHER.
ATRI AND HIS SONS WERE DRAGGED TO A TREE WITH A HOLLOW TRUNK.
YOU WILL NOW GO ON A LONG JOURNEY.
SHOW HIM THE WAY.
ATRI WAS THROWN INTO THE HOLLOW.
FATHER!

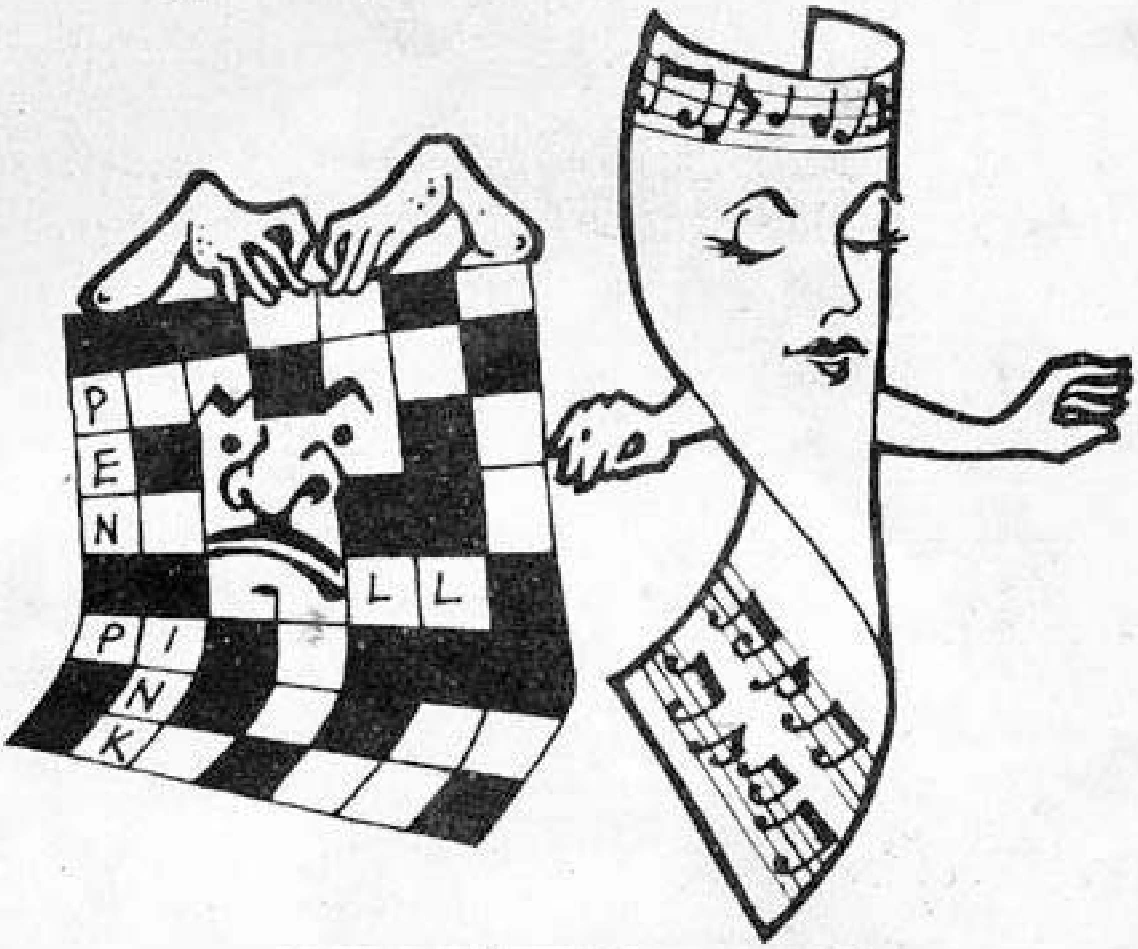


IS THIS INFINITY...
...OR AM I IN THE WOMB OF MOTHER EARTH ?
THE NEXT MOMENT HE HEARD SOME NOISES. HE LOOKED UP.
MY SONS !


FATHER!
FATHER THEY ARE GOING TO SET THIS PLACE ON FIRE. I HEARD THEM SAY SO.
WHAT SHALL WE DO?
LET US PRAY TO THE ASHVINS!
EE-A-AH!
O ASHVINS. SAVE THE BOYS.
O ASHVINS! COME TO OUR RESCUE! NOW THIS VERY MOMENT!
YOU MUST COME. NOW!


THE CALL WAS HEARD. THE ASHVINS CAME.
THOSE DASYUS WHO DARED TO PUT UP A FIGHT FELL.
THE WISER ONES FLED AS THE ASHVINS ADVANCED IN THEIR CHARIOT, DRAWN BY TWO ASSES.
SOON —
WATER!
THE ASHVINS ARE HERE!
WE SALUTE YOU, O TWINS.
ATRI'S FAITH AND COURAGE HAD PAID OFF. HE LOST NEITHER HIS FREEDOM NOR HIS LIFE.

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